Astoria Fire Department

120th Anniversary Celebration

and

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Astoria hose cart team - early 1900's

Astoria, Oregon

June 16 and 17, 1990

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CITY OF ASTORIA
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

The City of Astoria - the oldest American settlement west of the Rocky Mountains, bids you welcome to our first Fireman's Muster in recent years. The opening of our Fire Museum is the 120th anniversary of fire fighters in Astoria. Through the years, our firemen have fought valiantly to save our homes and buildings. This museum is a tribute to those valiant men. Enjoy your visit here and explore our other museums - the Flavel House, the Heritage Museum and the Columbia River Maritime Museum.

Sincerely,

THE CITY OF ASTORIA

Edith Henningsgaard

Edith Henningsgaard
Mayor

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6 am - 9 pm

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FIREMEN'S TOURNAMENT
JULY 4, 1882

From THE DAILY ASTORIAN, July 6, 1882
Reprinted with permission.

Precisely at 12 o'clock noon, the procession reached Flavel's warehouse where a generous repast had been set for our visitors, and to which they were escorted. All were made welcome, and some four hundred being thus provided for, the firemen broke ranks and went to get their lunch and prepare for the great event of the day:

THE TOURNAMENT

Which has been the theme in fire department circles for the last three weeks. By 2:30 p.m. all was in readiness, Messrs. Kearney, Minto, Strang, Trenchard, Hume, Hansen and Fox being the judges, the last three being provided with stop watches. By this time Squemoqua street was covered with a crowd of people that made locomotion almost an impossibility, and space having been cleared, the contests began.

The first was for steam engines to run 100 yards, hose company to run 300 yards, lay 100 feet of hose and throw water, two prizes being offered, $100 to first, $50 to second.

Astoria Engine Co. No. 1 started, and made the run in good style, getting their engine in place and connection made in 48 seconds, the hose cart coming flying after at high speed. The outlook for a fine record was favorable, but as the cart thundered by the crowd closed in and a hundred voices yelled "water."

'Twas impossible to see the hose cart from the engine, or to make any signal in the surging mass that could be distinguishable, and though a record of 1.15 was easily attainable, the hose was dropped and the order given to "man the engine," no time being taken.

A cordon of police was formed and a special detail of firemen placed to prevent a recurrence of such a rush, and when Rescue No. 2 sped down the course they had a clear track. They made a fine effort and won the first prize--time 1.10¼.

Columbia No. 3, of Portland, started up and got steam and a stream in 10 minutes and something. Rescue No. 2 got steam up and threw water in 7.39, and Astoria No. 1 did the same in 6.20½, winning the $50 prize.

Next in the program came the hand engine contest which lapsed for lack of competition.

The next was for hose companies of 12 men to run 600 yards with 300 feet of hose on reel: Rescue No. 2 went in to win and did it like little men, winning first prize, $75, in 1.51 3/4. Columbia No. 3 did well, too, winning second prize, of $25, in 1.52½. Astoria No. 1 did not enter.

The next prize was for $50, for Hook and Ladder companies to run 300 yards and get a man on top of a 30-foot ladder. Alert H. & L. Co., of Astoria, made the run in 1.10¼. We consider that the hooks made the neatest run of the tournament, though the time might have been cut down five seconds but for a slight mishap at the start.

Continued ...

The fifth contest was for hose companies to "make" and "break" five couplings in "line" hose--a $40 prize, won by Rescue No. 2 in 1.58¼.

The sixth and last was a sweepstakes foot race for any fireman of any company in Oregon or Washington Territory, to run 300 yards. The first prize was won by Ed. Knox of Columbia No. 3--$30; the second prize, $10, by Albert Mayor, of Multnomah No. 2.

Immediately after the tournament closed the boys got their coin, and thus closed the most extensive and successful firemen's tournament ever held in the state of Oregon.

###

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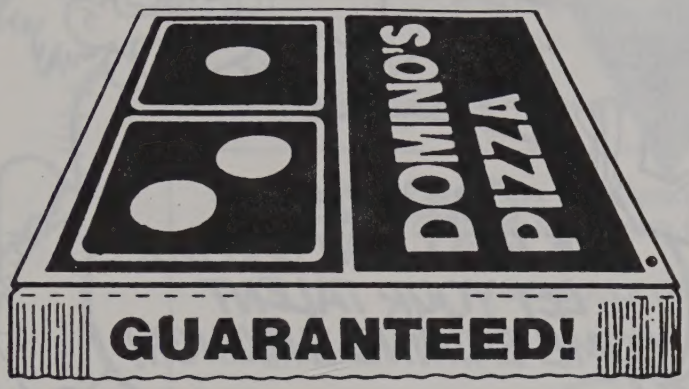

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KIDS CLUB COLORING PAGE

ASTORIA FIRE DEPARTMENT
120th YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
AND FIREMEN'S MUSTER
June 16 and 17, 1990

The Astoria Fire Department and Clatsop County Firefighter's Association welcome you to our 120th Anniversary Celebration and Firemen's Muster

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, June 15

12:00 Noon	Registration open

Saturday, June 16

8:00	Parade assembly
9:30	Parade begins
11:30	Women's Hosecarts
12:30	Men's Motorized Hosewagons
2:00	Lunch
2:30	Teenage Event
3:00	Women's Motorized Pumpers
4:00	Steamers
4:30	Men's Bucket Brigade
5:30	Museum Opening
8:00	Adult dance and game night at Expo Center Teen dance at Fairgrounds

Sunday, June 17

8:00	Pancake breakfast
10:00	Men's Hosecarts
11:30	Women's Motorized Hosewagons
12:30	Lunch
1:00	Teenage event
1:30	Men's Motorized Pumpers
2:30	Women's Bucket Brigade

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In the beginning...

One hundred twenty years ago, five men held a town meeting to start a volunteer fire department in Astoria. That meeting, on August 12, 1870, led to the election of six men to recruit manpower and to raise money to buy equipment for the Astor Co. No. 1.

In a short time, 40 members were signed up. The men of Astor Co. No. 1 looked sharp in their uniforms of black pants, red shirts with wide collars buttoned over the left side, and black belts three inches wide. The company name was stamped in gold letters across the belts.

Eighteen days after their first meeting, the firefighters were called out on their first alarm. Seventeen firefighters quickly extinguished the blaze at the home of H.A. Snow, at Skamokawa and Washington streets (now Fifth and Commercial). That was the beginning of a long and proud tradition of the Astoria Fire Department.

Today the department is funded and operated by the City of Astoria. The department has a professional staff of 21 with an annual budget of just over a million dollars. It has two stations and a fleet of two engines, two aerials and a mini-pumper. The newest is a 1989 75-foot Quint, a combination aerial and 1500 gallons-per-minute pumper.

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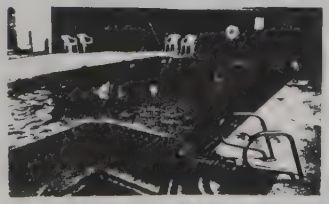

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Astoria got its first fire engine on November 7, 1870. The steamer *Okanagon* brought the hand engine made by Hunnerman and bought used from the Portland fire department. Capt. George Flavel, one of the founders of the Astor Co. No. 1 (which was later renamed Astoria Fire Company No. 1), let the company store the engine in his warehouse for three dollars a month rent. The engine was later sold to the Independence volunteer firefighters.

Astoria Fire Department traces its roots to several other companies. Rescue Co. No. 2, the city's second volunteer group, was organized on July 14, 1877. An engine house was built at what is now 11th and Commercial streets. The company paid $5,000 for a Silsby second-class steamer that took first prize at the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia, Pa, in 1876. The engine was still in service during the great fire of 1922 that wiped out the downtown area.

The Alert Hook and Ladder Company was formed on June 12, 1877. The company bought a Hayes Patent 3rd Class ladder truck which is now on exhibit at the Clatsop County Historical Society's new Uppertown Firefighters' Museum.

Columbia Engine Co. No., 3, the last volunteer group in the city, was organized on September 7, 1890. It boasted 77 members and a Clapp & Jones steam pumper which was used for firefighting until the city installed a gravity water system. The pumper was later traded to a scrapyard for 1,000 feet of two-inch fire hose. According to stories, the Portland Fire Bureau rescued the pumper from the scrapyard and restored it.

The present paid department was created by the City Council in 1897.

###

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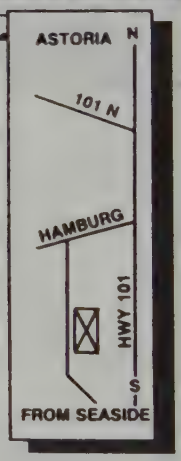

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Hosecart champ remembers 1915 muster

In 1915, Sophia Urell was part of a 12-woman muster team from Astoria that won the Pacific Coast championship. She particularly remembers the hosecart race: "You really had to go--I'm 93 years old and," remembering it, "my feet are still going."

Seven years later she watched from her hilltop home in Astoria as the 1922 fire devastated the city's downtown. She has only one word to describe that fire: "Awful."

Mrs. Urell's bother, Charles Rahkonen, was an Astoria firefighter during that period and for many more years. Her husband Emil participated in the men's muster team of 1915. She remembers that her husband, who is no longer living, won some silver and gold medals for wrestling in his day, but doesn't remember whether the men's team won in the 1915 muster.

Mrs. Urell has no trouble remembering the women's team: it stands out as one of the highlights of her life, particularly that hosecart race. There were a thousand feet of hose rolled around the cart, she recalls, "and it was a two-wheeler like they have in the museum." It had a long handle, the length of which was extended by means of a rope on a reel in order to accommodate the 12 participants, she explains, "and boy, did we go! We had a lot of fun, but you have to work mighty fast, and it's a heavy load to pull."

To slow down toward the end of the 100-yard course, two women dropped out and grabbed onto the ropes at the back of the hosecart and acted as brakes. To complete the race, the women then had to activate a fire hydrant.

When Mrs. Urell mentions some present-day health problems, somehow it isn't surprising to hear her say, "You can't give in. If you give in, you'll be sitting around all the time."

The 1915 women's team definitely didn't sit around. They performed at many Pacific Northwest events--including carnivals--before competing in the Pacific Coast contest in Portland. The twelve, all 18-19 years of age, were recruited by a well-known Astorian named Fred Brown, "a little short fellow, a very nice man who worked at the Elks' Club for years," Mrs. Urell recalls. Brown served as the manager of the team.

Sophia Urell

The participants were accompanied by three women "who watched over us," and all were delighted with the reception they received wherever they went. As champions, they were honored at many dinners, banquets and other events with all expenses paid.

She wonders whether pulling a hosecart in a muster competition is something "a girl nowadays would even think of doing," but she and her teammates thoroughly enjoyed it. "We were young then," she laughs.

She doesn't know whether other members of the team are still living, and she can't remember all of their names: "that was a long time ago." But Sophia Urell won't forget the muster event of 1915.

###

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Fire raged through downtown Astoria in 1922.

ON FIRE!

"Fire demons ravage Astoria!" screamed the front page of *The Morning Astorian* on December 9, 1922.

The day before, 32 blocks--virtually all of the downtown--were destroyed by fire. The morning paper, appropriately labelled "fire edition," carried the details.

"Business district wiped out--property damage at $15,000,000," was the headline on one story. "Relief work started, offers of aid, many to halt looting," read another. "Merchants are planning for Xmas," read another story, chronicling the recovery the recovery efforts that started even before the blaze was extinguished.

The fire started quietly in the wee hours of December 8, in the basement of Thiel Bros. restaurant and billiard parlor on Commercial Street, between 11th and 12th. First reported about 2 a.m., the blaze spread quickly through the wood-frame building. Within ten minutes of the alarm, "billowing flame was being flung high above the building," the newspaper reported. Within a half-hour, the entire block was ablaze. In less than an hour, "leaping lances of fire" danced across the streets or roared beneath the wooden viaduct below Commercial Street and torched buildings in the blocks to the south and west.

Continued

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Nine hours later, the fire remained unchecked. "The flames gnawed unceasingly."

Finally, at about 1:30 p.m., the inferno was out. Some 32 square blocks were destroyed. Several buildings had been dynamited to create a fire break. "Masses of burning debris emphasized here and there by some grotesque fragment of heat-wracked masonry that had temporarily defied the elements and stood a mournful sentinel watching darkly over the holocuast below" was how the *Morning Astorian* so colorfully described the scene.

Although the actual fire was put out in about 22 hours, the embers in the rubble burned for weeks.

Fire departments from many surrounding communities joined the valiant fight against the blaze. Even Portland sent two steamers and one motor pumper.

More than 220 shops, rooming houses and other businesses were burned out. The fire left 2,500 people homeless. Many moved away from Astoria. The cause of the fire was never determined.

Two people died in the fire. Prominent businessman Norris staples collapsed and died of a heart attack while pushing a car out of fire danger at his car dealership. A logger committed suicide, hanging himself under the docks during the fire.

Astoria recovered quickly. Even before the flames were quenched, the displaced merchants were busy finding new storefronts and ordering new merchandise.

The city rebuilt its downtown, filling in over the rubble to creat a foundation for the new.

"Phoenix-like, Astoria is unfolding her wings to arise from a couch of flame with a greater and more splendid glory," the *Morning Astorian* announced.

###

The aftermath.

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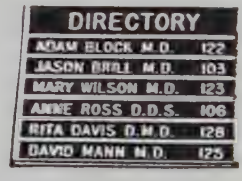

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Uppertown Station in the old days.

Remembering...

The stout brick building that now houses the Uppertown Firefighters' Museum was built in 1896 by famous Portland architect Emil Schact as part of the North Pacific Brewery, a popular capacity it filled until 1915, when Prohibition shut it down.

In 1928 the City of Astoria rebuilt the structure as Uppertown Fire Station #2, and a wooden addition was built on to the east side to serve as the city's road maintenance shop. Uppertown Station #2 served until 1960, when it was retired and the new headquarters fire station was built right behind it.

The official opening of the museum is during this weekend's muster, on Saturday, June 16, at **5:30p.m.** Visitors will see exhibit items ranging from 1877 to 1921, comprised of hand-pulled, horse-drawn and motorized vehicles, and an extensive collection of smaller pieces of firefighting equipment and memorabilia. In addition, there are photos and information dealing with the major fires in Astoria.

In 1990 and 1991, the former road maintenance shop will serve as a reassembly and restoration area for a number of antique pieces of equipment and will be open for public viewing.

###

AJP

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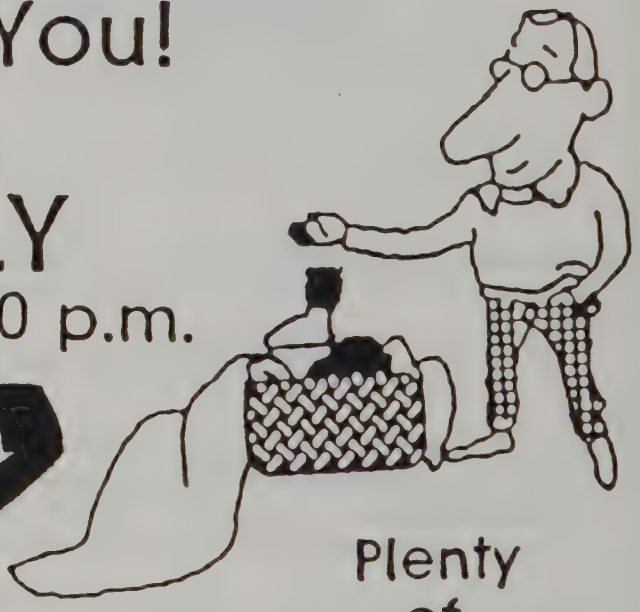

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Steamer Rules

Procedure: With the pump drained, the steamer with the hose cart crew will begin at the start line. The steamer may already be fired up with boiler pressure. When signaled, the steamer will proceed to the drafting tank and set up to pump. When the engineer's feet touch the ground, the hose cart crew will be signaled to start.

The hose cart crew runs 100 feet to the nozzle line where two persons pull off the male end of the 2 1/2" double-jacketed hose while the hose cart continues to the steamer. While the fireman remains at the steamer, crew members pick up the drafting sleeve and place it in the drafting tank. The engineer commences drafting operations and discharges water into the line. The nozzle crew aims stream at the target to knock it off the stand. Time is called when the target leaves the stand.

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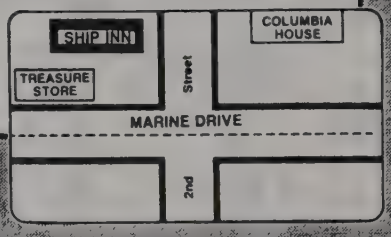

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TEAM NAME	TIME	TEAM NAME	TIME	TEAM NAME	TIME

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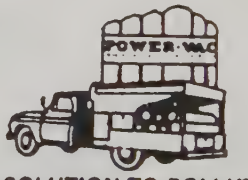

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Class 1: Cylinders seven inches and over
Class 2: Cylinders bewteen four and seven inches in diameter
Class 3: Cylinders four inches or less in diameter

Fifteen minutes will be allowed for each pumper from point of call (5 minutes for readiness and 10 minutes for pumping and getting off the platform).

Objective: To pump a stream of water in distance of feet to the farthest dime-size drop.

Class 1		Class 2		Class 3	
Team	**Distance**	**Team**	**Distance**	**Team**	**Distance**
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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Men's

Team	Time

MOTORIZED PUMPERS

Crew: Up to 6 pers., including driver.

Procedure: Apparatus is positioned at starting line with engine idling, and team seated on benches located 20 ft. from the center line of the apparatus stall. When signaled, the crew runs and jumps on the pumper, proceeds 25 ft. to the hydrant and drops off the hydrant crew and supply line. The remaining crew and apparatus proceeds approximately 150 ft. down the course and stops. Crew disconnects the supply line from the remaining hose and hook it to the pump intake. The nozzle is then connected and water is aimed at the target, 50 ft. from the nozzle line. Time stops when the target falls.

Women's

Team	Time

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Men's

Team	Time

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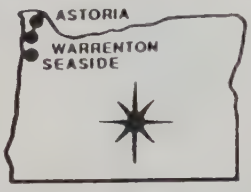
Crew: Up to 6 pers., including driver.

Procedure: Apparatus is position at starting line with engine idling, and team seated on benches located 20 ft. from the center line of the apparatus stall. When the starting gun is fired, the team and hose wagon proceed 25 ft. to the hydrant, drop off the hydrant crew and supply line. Remaining crew and apparatus proceed approximately 150 ft. down the course and stops. The team disconnects sufficient line from hose bed and stretches the hose to the nozzle line. The nozzle is connected and water is delivered to the target, 50 ft. from the nozzle line. Time is called when the target falls.

Women's

Team	Time

NORTH COAST JEEP EAGLE



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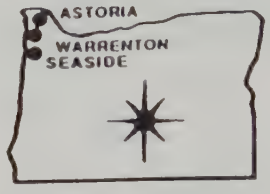

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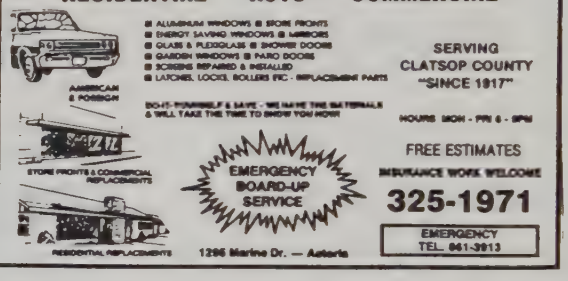

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TIME: Each team will have two minutes in which to take water from a dip tank with a bucket (5 buckets), pass it down a straight line of fire-people and fill two 25 gallon tanks.

OBJECTIVE: Fill two 25 gallon tanks in the fastest time.

DISQUALIFICATION: Will result if any team member throws water, kicks a bucket, or acts in an unsportsmanlike manner.

Men's

Team	Time

Women's

Team	Time

ASTORIA FIRE DEPARTMENT
120th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
AND FIREMEN'S MUSTER
June 16 and 17, 1990

The Astoria Fire Department and Clatsop County Firefighter's Association wish to express our appreciation of the support received from many individuals and groups in putting together our 120th Anniversary Celebration and Firemen's Muster. Without the tremendous personal and financial assistance that these people have contributed to our effort, a successful event would not have been possible. We wish to express our deepest appreciation to everyone that has played a role in the huge task of planning, promoting and organizing an event of this magnitude. Thanks to your help, this Muster, the first in Astoria in about 70 years, will be a great success and, hopefully, an annual event.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

The City of Astoria
International Association Of Firefighter's Local 696
Clatsop County Firefighter's Association
Greater Astoria Area Chamber of Commerce - Committee to Promote Astoria
Clatsop County Historical Society
Astoria Firefighter's Support Group
Olin Greene, Oregon State Fire Marshal
Tongue Point Job Corps Center
North Coast Teen Dance
Sunset Parks and Recreation District, TNT Program
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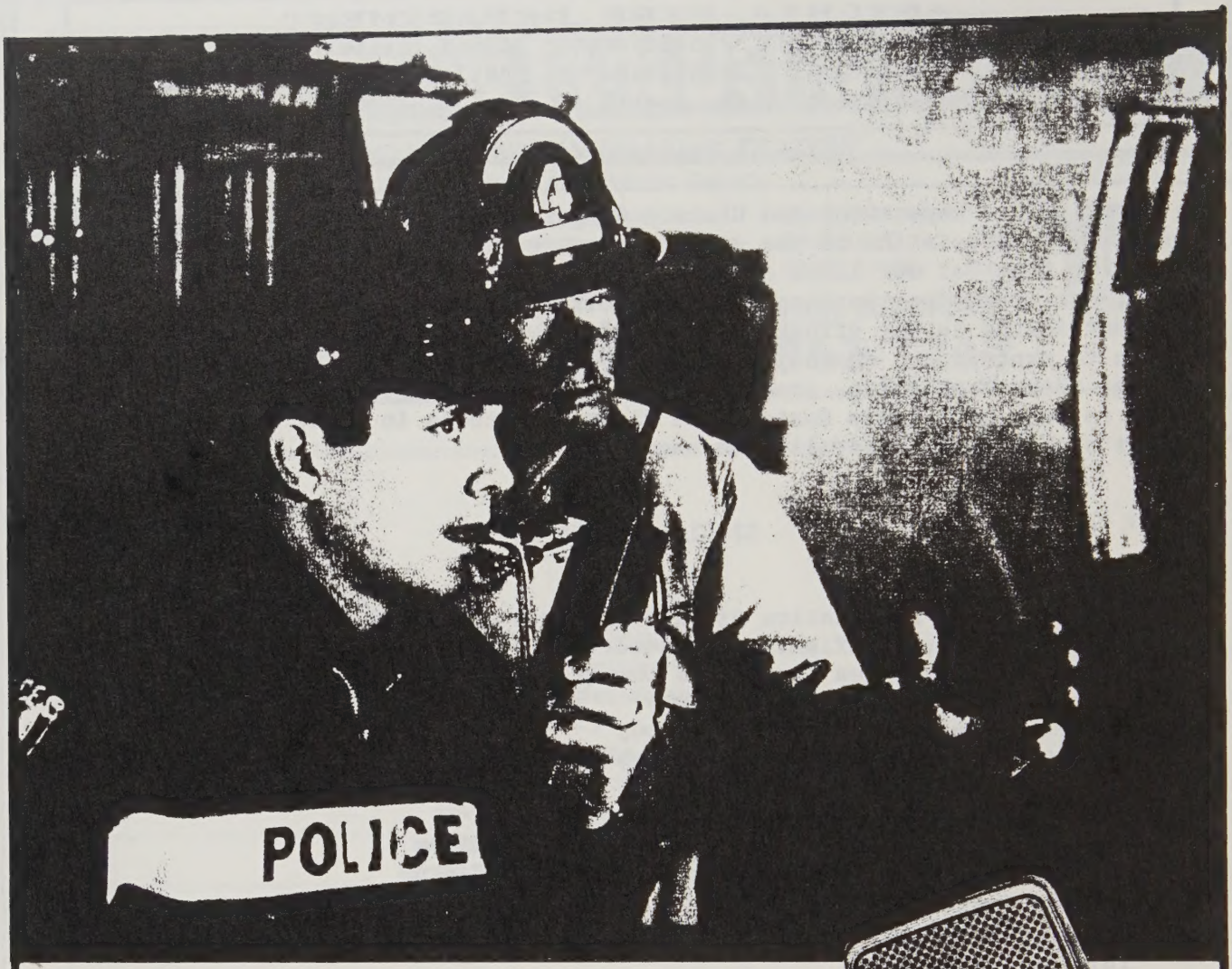
Hugh McKenna III
Robin Sheppard
Sandi Moore
Margaret and Robert Backlin
Betty and Laverne Truax
Jerry and Mary Lee Alderman
Darlene Felkins
Arni Rautio, Chief, Astoria Fire Department, Retired
Bill Vernon
Eino Mattson
Our appreciation also goes to anyone that we may have missed.

The invaluable help that each of you has provided has been the key to the success of our celebration. You are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Bill Conway Jr.

Bill Conway Jr.
Chairman, 120th Anniversary Committee



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1932 pumper for the volunteer fire department of Sumner, Washington. Kenworth's first.

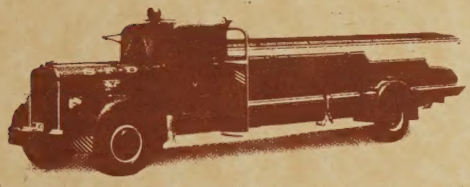
1935 KW ladder truck. Sheet metal enclosing tool compartments and ladder rack fabricated in the fire department's shop, Spokane, Washington.

1935 Kenworth tractor with a 1908 aerial trailer that was originally drawn by horses.

1939 Cab-Over-Engine (C.O.E.) for the Los Angeles Fire Department. A "quad" unit with ladder, tank, pumper and hose wagon capabilities.

1939 Kenworth with an enclosed "canoe-style" overhead ladder rack.

1940 ladder truck for the Spokane Fire Department. World's first fully automatic aerial ladder truck.



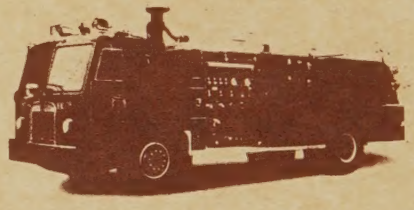
1950 Seattle City Service ladder truck. One of six incorporating a fully enclosed cab; modeled after a design by William Jones, Chief Engineer for the city.

1950-'52 crash truck for the Port of Seattle.

1951 pumper. One of the earliest designs to also include a cab assembly fabricated by Kenworth.

1952 "Bullnose" Kenworth. The "square nose" is an adaptation of "round nose" C.O.E. designs of the late 1930s.

1965-1987 tank truck with front-mounted low-capacity pump; an idea dating as far back as 1912.



1980 Kenworth pumper. Featured low-cab-forward design for easier cab access and improved visibility.

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